

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9446

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0368

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, SF, BC, UK

SUBJECT: SSRC LEADER DENIES ANC OR PAC TIES

REF: A. JOHANNESBURG 0140, B. GABORONE 0335

1. SIMON MOKOENA, SSRC TREASURER AND APPARENTNT LEADER OF THE ORGANIZATION IN THE GABORONE AREA, VISITED EMBASSY FEBRUARY 7. DURING COURSE OF MEETING, PAO WAS ABLE TO GUIDE DISCUSSION TOWARD FIRST TOPIC MENTIONED PARA 1, REF A, I.E. SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR HIS ORGANIZATION.

2. ANC ASSISTANCE TO SSRC: MOKOENA SAID HIS GROUP HAS NEVER RECEIVED ANY ASSISTANCE FROM EITHER THE ANC OR PAC. "THEY MAKE A LOT OF CLAIMS ABOUT HELPING US", HE SAID, " BUT THEY HINDER RATHER THAN HELP US". WHEN MASHININI (WHOM MOKOENA STILL CONSIDERS THE LEADER OF SSRC) WAS IN BOTSWANA LAST YEAR, OTHER SSRC MEMBERS FELT IT WOULD BE TOO DANGEROUS FOR
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HIM TO BE IN GABORONE DURING BOTSWANA'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY OBSERVANCES. MOKOENA SAID A GROUP OF "LIBERALS" WHOM HE COULD (OR WOULD) NOT IDENTIFY RAISED MONEY TO SENT MASHININI AND TWO OTHERS TO BRITAIN. WHEN BRITISH IMMIGRATION THREATENED TO DEPORT THEM, THE ANC CAME TO THEIR RESCUE, RESULTING IN A TEMPORARY WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SSRC AND ANC. LATER, THERE WAS A

DISAGREEMENT, MOKOENA SAID, AND MASHININI BROKE AWAY FROM THE ANC. THE ONLY ASSISTANCE THE SSRC HAS RECEIVED IN BOTSWANA HAS BEEN FROM THE GO, ACCORDING TO MOKOENA.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO FIRM EVIDENCE RE DEGREE TO WHICH GOB WILL TOLERATE SSRC ACTIVITIES AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS HERE, WE SURMISE THAT THERE IS FAIRLY HIGH DEGREE OF TOLERANCE. AS WE HAVE NOTED IN OUR EARLIER REPORTING, GOB CONSIDERS SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS TO BE A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS SOCIAL PROBLEM. IT IS CLEAR FROM REF B THAT MOKOENA IS TRYING TO EXERCISE LEADERSHIP TO KEEP YOUNGSTERS OUT OF TROUBLE. GOB WOULD CERTAINLY ENCOURAGE THAT. ON THE OTHER HAND, AS SEEMS TO BE EVIDENT FROM REQUESTED DEPARTURE OF MASHININI, GOB DOES NOT WANT SSRC TO GO "TOO PUBLIC", I.E., TO ADOPT TOO HIGH A PROFILE OUTSIDE OF SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENT REFUGEE COMMUNITY.

4. WE HAVE RECEIVED CABLE FROM BOSTON-BASED, ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP, NATIONAL STUDENT COALITION AGAINST RACISM, INVITING MASHININI SUCCESSOR KHOTSO SEATHLOLO "TO U.S. TO SPEAK ON SOUTH AFRICA FOR TWO MONTHS". GROUP PROMISES TO COVER ALL EXPENSES. CABLE, SIGNED BY ONE VINCE EAGAN, GIVES CONGRESSMAN DELLUMS AS A REFERENCE.

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